

MEETING SUMMARY | Dinkey Collaborative Full Group

December 1, 2011

Dinkey Landscape Restoration Project, Sierra National Forest

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Action Items

1. **All Members– by COB December 15-** to complete the collaboration evaluation online survey and submit any remaining comments on December 1 materials.
2. **Mr. John Mount** – to send biomass paper to Dorian for distribution to the group and posting to DataBasin
3. **Mr. Craig Thomas-** to follow-up with Larry Swan and Gareth Mayhead
4. **Stan Van Velsor** – to follow-up with Jonathon Kusel and solicit a full socioeconomic assessment proposal.
5. **Ms. Pam Flick** – to contact Rebecca Garcia and further develop the communication plan.
6. **Mr. Mosé Jones-Yellin and Mr. Craig Thomas** – to send the SNF pre applications to Sierra Nevada Conservancy to Dorian for distribution to the group and posting to DataBasin.
7. **Mr. Dorian Fougères** – to distribute the Soaproot and Eastfork project dates, schedule the CBI fisher research webinar, post December1 presentations, and revise the finance work group charge after December 15.

1. Meeting Synopsis

The Dinkey Collaborative held its eleventh meeting on December 1, 2011. Invited guests from the Forest Service (Larry Swan and Andrei Rykoff) and U.C. Berkeley (Gareth Mayhead) briefed the group on considerations regarding the use of biomass. The group subsequently discussed how ecological restoration activities might support biomass as a byproduct, and will follow-up on ways that the group might integrate these issues in its planning (no decisions were made about specific approaches). After lunch the group evaluated its facilitation support with the

U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (Debra Drecksel), and expressed a desire for continued assistance. The Sierra Institute for Community and Environment (Jonathan Kusel) then presented a socioeconomic assessment framework to the group; following discussion, the group agreed to request a detailed proposal. Finance work group members reported back on their visit to Washington, D.C., noting that the combination of industry and environmental members garnered attention. The Conservation Biology Institute (Wayne Spencer and Susan Antenen) presented a draft proposal for Pacific fisher research that would integrate multiple scales of information on the Dinkey Landscape, in preparation for submission to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy in January 2012. A special webinar will be scheduled to allow members to ask more questions and provide comments; the full Collaborative will review a revised proposal and may choose to support it at their January 19, 2012, meeting. Comments were requested on a draft promotional brochure and communication plan outline, and updates were provided on the NEPA timelines of the Soaproot and Eastfork projects, as well as Sierra National Forest grant applications to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Members then celebrated their one year anniversary!

2. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Mosé Jones-Yellin, Dinkey Landscape Restoration Project (DLRP) Project Manager for the Sierra National Forest (SNF), welcomed participants to the full Collaborative's one year anniversary meeting and reviewed the agenda.

All meeting materials and presentations are posted to the group's site on Databasin.org.

3. Biomass Utilization Presentations

The biomass handout was reviewed by the group for any comments and questions. Mr. Chad Hanson noted topic three and nine could be interpreted as placing biomass ahead of ecological restoration, and should be clarified. Two informational Biomass presentations were prepared and presented by Mr. Gareth Mayhead and Mr. John Mount.

A. Biomass Utilization Technologies Presentation by Mr. Gareth Mayhead

Mr. Mayhead noted the importance of locating existing biomass markets and associated economic factors, which directly correlate with biomass removal. He reviewed available facilities in California, and opportunities for entry into the existing biomass markets. Mr. Mayhead also commented on the need to identify the biomass forms that can be derived from ecological restoration treatments in advance of field activities, in order to utilize the material most efficiently.

Mr. Craig Thomas commented on the difficulty and high cost of transporting biomass on the Dinkey landscape, and asked Mr. Mayhead if there were ways to better approach the limited infrastructure. Mr. Mayhead noted the importance of planning for biomass removal in advance, and stated that a trial and error approach can be applied to transporting biomass. Mr. Hanson commented that the presentation was geared towards a business model and profits, which does not directly correlate with restoration goals. Mr. Thomas clarified that he was not necessarily suggesting more saw mills or biomass facilities, but the Dinkey site has large existing biomass piles, which has increased pressure for improvements in infrastructure. Mr. Steven Shaw also emphasized the importance of infrastructure for transportation, and stated there was an opportunity for portable biomass facilities with basic capabilities.

Ms. Cindy Whelan commented on California's standards for exploring renewable energy, noting that there was no drive to fund these new endeavors, and that companies have no incentive to create new biomass facilities. Ms. Carolyn Ballard noted there were no grants available in California to promote biomass fuels, but other agencies like the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) do have renewable energy grants like the Rural Energy for America. These grants help to facilitate the creation of renewable energy power plants. Also, Ms. Ballard noted that in California there is a focus on producing energy crops, solar, wind power, and liquid fuels for the creation of biodiesel. Ms. Ballard commented that in the past ten years, California has repeatedly discussed opportunities for biomass fuels.

Mr. Thomas noted that working with existing biomass facilities and businesses is a priority in the DLRP site area. Unfortunately, past projects have not been successful gaining local businesses participation for restoration projects due to the business risks. Mr. Thomas also noted there should be more alternatives researched to avoid burning piles of biomass. Mr. Mayhead suggested that each pile should be thoroughly investigated for various sizes of debris to evaluate the value of each component. Also, sorting piles would lead to the discovery of inappropriate items, such as garbage, that should not be included in the biomass pile. Mr. Mosé Jones-Yellin noted that to maximize the efficiency of transportation, equipment should be analyzed appropriately, and pair the correct transport equipment with the corresponding matter size.

Mr. Ramiro Rojas commented that low grade material has no efficient way of removal. Mr. Larry Swan suggested that the smaller material is often a waste product, and emphasized the importance of investigating more effective removal strategies. Mr. Ray Laclergue added that there is an association between the low value of the small material and pollution: the small material opportunity cost is high and therefore burning has a greater appeal, but at the cost of air quality. Mr. Laclergue suggested subsidizing the cost of transport in order to get more value out of the biomass piles. Mr. Hanson noted that he did not favor of investigating subsidies for

the removal of biomass. Mr. Andrei Rykoff noted that while the funding for the CFLRP remains unclear and the removal of biomass is costly, projects that have a business model with all the financial calculations and a completed NEPA report will be the first to receive additional funding that is available.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Craig Thomas to follow-up with Larry Swan and Gareth Mayhead on how to integrate biomass removal as a byproduct of ecological restoration activities.

Biomass utilization was discussed further later in the meeting's agenda. Mr. Hanson strongly disfavored the group continuing a conversation with Mr. Mayhead and Mr. Swan about the possibilities of new biomass plants. Mr. Thomas noted the creation of more air emissions was not an ideal outcome and exploring new possibilities would be necessary for effective planning. Ms Ballard added that with her fire management perspective, she would like to see another option other than burning biomass piles. Mr. Rojas supported further discussion on biomass options. The facilitator acknowledged Mr. Hanson's concerns, and that at the same time biomass is referenced in the CFLRP statute, hence it would not be appropriate to limit the scope of associated discussions. Furthermore, he explained that continued discussions would not include any decisions on behalf of the group; these are made during collaborative meetings.

B. Presentation by Mr. John Mount

Mr. Mount's presentation was geared to establish the understanding that restoration projects can be successful and generate funding. Mr. Mount presented past thriving projects on Southern California Edison lands, which were economically feasible and generated small profits.

Mr. Hanson commented on the distinction in terminology between forest health and biodiversity. Mr. Mount clarified that there were different measures of forest health from snags to timber, but there are no defined standards. Mr. Mount suggested treating every species with the same importance, so as not to create fragmentation.

Mr. Thomas commented that he appreciated Mr. Mount's perspective on biomass utilization. Building on Mr. Mayhead and Mr. Swan's presentation, Mr. Thomas suggested allocating funds towards biomass utilization and establishing an understanding in ecosystem services. Mr. Mount emphasized creating a cost-effective biomass plant. Mr. Laclergue noted private forest management has increased the diversity, and results have been documented. Mr. Hanson cautioned that an increase in animals does not necessarily equal a healthy ecosystem.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. John Mount – to send biomass paper to Dorian for distribution to the group and posting to DataBasin

4. Evaluation of the Collaborative Process and Facilitation

As Mr. Fougères and Ms. Golik stepped out the room, Ms. Debra Drecksell, USIECR conducted an anonymous and confidential evaluation of the collaborative process and facilitation.

ACTION ITEM: All Members– *by COB December 15-* to complete the collaboration evaluation online survey

5. Socioeconomic Monitoring

The facilitator provided a handout summarizing the proposed scope of work for a socioeconomic assessment, and a series of related questions. Mr. Thomas introduced Mr. Jonathan Kusel from the Sierra Institute. Mr. Kusel presented his work on socioeconomic monitoring, and associated field work experience. He outlined important factors and objectives for socioeconomic monitoring work that could inform the Dinkey Collaborative.

1. Monitoring Timeframe
 - a. Mr. Thomas expressed his support for a proactive socioeconomic monitoring approach, where information garnered from monitoring helps to inform future project design. He asked Mr. Kusel what an appropriate timeframe would be for analyzing potential outcomes. Mr. Kusel suggested from five to ten years' time. Mr. Kusel also suggested considering local employment, training, and a communication plan to influence engagement with local people.
2. Boundary Analysis
 - a. Mr. Rojas and Mr. Marc Meyer asked what the appropriate boundary would be for analysis. There noted that the Forest had different categories of users, and it was hard to define "local use." Mr. Rojas stated that the Dinkey site has ambiguous data, and the users are not well established, hence the Dinkey proposal lacked the socioeconomic foundation discussed in Mr. Kusel's presentation. Mr. Meyer proposed to look into defining directly and indirectly effected communities. Mr. Rojas further noted the lack of local participation in the Dinkey Collaborative meetings, and would like to see more involvement. Mr. Kusel acknowledged these challenges, and echoed the suggestion of local business and retailer engagement. The group would have to wrestle with the boundary of their work, and decide where to focus their attention – on local communities immediate adjacent to the Forest, to communities within the Forest, or otherwise.

3. TREAT Model

- a. Mr. Stan Van Velsor noted the TREAT model was the minimum information that the collaborative should develop, and that the proposed socioeconomic work would go further than this. Mr. Meyer explained that other proposals lacked a strong socioeconomic element. It would be important to focus on a few factors that are critical, and focus on these. Mr. Kusel added that social scientists had not provided a lot of direction here, and that things like health measures are important but also challenging to incorporate.

4. Local involvement

- a. Ms. Ballard commented on the community of Shaver Lake, and explained that there are two types of users, primary residents and secondary residents (i.e. people with a second home). She continued by stating primary residents only get involved in local planning processes when there is a concern with smoke or fire, and these participants are always the same. She suggested that locals are generally accepting of smoke and wildfires.
- b. Mr. Rojas noted that socioeconomic factors are changing rapidly, and suggested directly involving locals in restoration work, such as Native American crews to help with the restoration process. Mr. Thomas noted that it was often hard to get consistent representation from the councils of Native American Tribes.
- c. Mr. Mosé Jones-Yellin supported the comments from Mr. Kusel and Mr. Hanson, which included both ecological and socioeconomic outcomes. It was important to define the community being examined, including people in the area and where money is going. In that regard, economic benefits are not the same as socioeconomic benefits, and need to be differentiated.
- d. Mr. Thomas also supported local engagement in restoration, particularly work that proactively tried to integrate socioeconomic benefits in ecological restoration treatment planning – through local engagement in the restoration work, for example. Mr. Thomas added the importance of reviewing projects from social, environmental, and economic perspectives – a “triple bottom line.” He suggested that supplemental brochures for the collaborative could involve local graphic arts students.

Mr. Kusel concluded by stating his willingness to draft a socioeconomic proposal for the DLRP. The group agreed that an initial proposal would be beneficial for the project, and would like to review the initial proposal upon completion.

ACTION ITEM: Stan Van Velsor – to follow-up with Jonathan Kusel and solicit a full socioeconomic assessment proposal

6. Report on Washington D.C. Promotional Trip

Mr. Thomas and Mr. Kent Duysen explained that their trip to Washington D.C. trip and discussions about the Dinkey CFLRP were very positive. They attended 11 meetings in two days, and learned that there will likely be a continuing funding resolution since a new budget has not been completed. They suggested in conversations that Dinkey should also receive the funding that was promised but not allocated previously. The work of the DLRP was well received, and the CFLR Program should be continued and grow. Ms. Ballard commented that funds are being pushed to launch new collaborative groups, but not to support established groups. In response to a question about advice received for the group, Mr. Thomas noted the positive feedback and the importance of project proposals that are tightly tied to the statutory language.

The group reviewed the draft “Finance Work Group Charge”. Mr. Van Velsor suggested adding a fourth bullet under the scope, which focused on helping to develop the annual budget for the project.

7. Conservation Biology Institute (CBI) Proposal for Fisher Research on Dinkey Landscape

Ms. Susan Antenen, CBI, introduced the fisher research topic and Mr. Wayne Spencer, CBI. The presentation given by Mr. Wayne Spencer via webinar relied on maps and models for addressing fisher habitat. Mr. Spencer noted that the proposed research would try and combine models that operate at different scales, and produce a tool that was like a decision tree for developing restoration strategies.

Mr. Hanson suggested establishing clear boundaries when studying all types of fisher uses. Mr. Spencer clarified that the data represented on the models were based on fire issues over the past 25 years, and all data was developed with the aid of fire experts.

Mr. Thomas supported the decision tree approach, the integration of data from a large scale to a fine scale, and further development of the linkages between the data and logic to create a user-friendly tool. Mr. Thomas noted the models provide a framework for options and questions when addressing fisher on the Dinkey landscape, and further suggested modifications can be adjusted.

Mr. Rojas asked if the model would be efficient in assessing small scale sites such as two to four acre meadows. Mr. Spencer explained the model is suited for fisher home range and is not

geared to focusing on a couple acres; it is more likely that units would be a few hundred acres. A meadow, therefore, may need to be assessed through field evaluation.

In response to a question from Ms. Kim Sorini-Wilson, Mr. Spencer informed the group that the final application date was January 21, 2012, and that if awarded funds would likely become available in mid to late summer, with the bulk of the work being completed ideally in one year. Mr. Mose Jones-Yellin emphasized that it would be important for the group to continue advancing its own planning efforts, and not wait until completion of the CBI research (if awarded).

8. Promotional Materials Review

Mr. Dorian Fougères presented promotional materials to the group, and reviewed the content and layout. He noted that an error regarding contact persons would be corrected immediately. Mr. Hanson suggested more contact links and emails, and the group agreed to reference a list of members on the Forest Service's Dinkey website. Mr. Mark Smith suggested adding the project's website link.

Ms. Pam Flick volunteered to further develop the communication plan outline. Mr. Jones-Yellin volunteered Ms. Rebecca Garcia, Sierra National Forest Public Information Officer, to help with this.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Pam Flick – to contact Rebecca Garcia and further develop the communication plan.

9. Informational Updates: Snowy Patterson, Soaproot, and Eastfork Project Status

Mr. Jones-Yellin explained that the Eastfork project EA will be sent to commenters for objection on January 25, 2012, and the decision notice will be published on April 16, 2012. Though the Soaproot project is not as advanced, the EA will still be sent for objection on May 09, 2012, and the decision notice published on August 02, 2012. Mr. Jones-Yellin also noted Snowy Patterson will be submitted in 2012.

Mr. Jones-Yellin noted that Sierra National Forest had also submitted pre-application information to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, but needed a state partner to receive a grant and it was unclear whether such a partnership could be arranged in time for the full application. Mr. Hanson asked to see the applications submitted, and Mr. Jones-Yellin agreed to circulate these.

The group agreed that it should be informed of and review any grant applications developed to advance work identified and planned by the Collaborative. This is distinct from grant applications by agencies or organizations to pursue work under their own mandate, rather than on behalf of the Collaborative. Mr. Thomas suggested it would be helpful to have a list of ongoing and upcoming grant applications.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Mosé Jones-Yellin and Mr. Craig Thomas – to send the SNF pre-applications to Sierra Nevada Conservancy to Dorian for distribution to the group and posting to DataBasin.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Dorian Fougères – to distribute the Soaproot and Eastfork project dates, schedule the CBI fisher research webinar, post December 1 presentations, and revise the finance work group charge after December 15.

10. Attendees

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|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Elaine Alaniz, USFS | 13. Mosé Jones-Yellin, USFS | 23. Kim Sorini-Wilson, USFS |
| 2. Susan Antenen, CBI | 14. Jonathan Kusel, Sierra Institute | 24. Wayne Spencer, CBI, via webinar |
| 3. Rich Bagley | 15. Ray Laclergue | 25. Ted Strauss, NRCS |
| 4. Carolyn Ballard, USFS | 16. Gareth Mayhead, UC Berkeley | 26. Larry Swan, USFS |
| 5. Debra Drecksell, USIECR | 17. Mark Meyer | 27. Curtis Tarver, NRCS |
| 6. Kent Duysen | 18. John Mount | 28. Craig Thomas |
| 7. Larry Duysen | 19. Ramiro Rojas, USFS | 29. Craig Thompson, USFS |
| 8. Pam Flick | 20. Andrei Rykoff, USFS | 30. Stan Van Velsor |
| 9. Dorian Fougères, CCP | 21. Steven Shaw | 31. Cindy Whelan, USFS |
| 10. Gabriella Golik, CCP | 22. Mark Smith | 32. Dave ?, NRCS |
| 11. Chad Hanson | | |
| 12. Steve Haze | | |